

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 EB-07 INR-07 SP-02 PM-04 /048 W

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R 161512Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9459

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 13312

STADIS////////////////////////////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, IT

SUBJECT: DEPT OF ARMY STUDY ON ITALIAN POLITICAL EVOLUTION

1. WE HAVE LEARNED FROM A COUPLE OF SOURCES THAT THE DEPT. OF THE ARMY IS STUDYING THE IMPACT OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SCENE ON U.S. INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT IN ITALY. APPARENTLY THE ASSESSMENT WAS RELATED TO, AND HAS BROUGHT AN AT LEAST TEMPORARY HALT IN, THE ARMY'S PLANS TO PREFINANCE THE CONSTRUCTION OF AMMUNITION STORAGE FACILITIES AT CAMP DARBY.

2. IN RECENT WEEKS WE HAVE ALSO HEARD FROM U.S. MILITARY SOURCES THAT THE RELUCTANCE OF THE PENTAGON TO CONSIDER JOINING IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AGUSTA 129 HELICOPTER IS TO SOME EXTENT BASED ON THE SAME SET OF RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE POLITICAL FUTURE OF ITALY.

3. WE BELIEVE WE ARE NEARING SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEMS IMPEDING CONSTRUCTION OF STORAGE FACILITIES AT CAMP DARBY. LIFTING THE OBSTACLES HAS TAKEN MONTHS OF PRESSURE EXERTED AT HIGH LEVELS TO OBTAIN AN ECOLOGICALLY UNPOPULAR DECISION TO CUT A LARGE NUMBER OF TREES AND MOST RECENTLY TO FIND A LOOPHOLE IN THE ITALIAN LAW THAT LIMITS STORAGE TONNAGE FAR BELOW NATO STANDARDS. THE TREES ARE NOW BEING CUT; WE HAVE BEEN ASSURED THAT THE CAPACITY PROBLEM HAS ALSO BEEN RESOLVED IN OUR FAVOR. IF THE PROJECT DOES NOT PROCEED MORE OR LESS ON SCHEDULE, THERE WILL OF COURSE BE EMBARRASSING QUESTIONS.

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SHOULD IT BECOME KNOWN, OR THE CONDITIONS BE CREATED FOR

INTELLIGENT GUESSING BY THE ITALIAN PRESS, THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT OR IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT ARE ACTING AS IF THE PCI WAS TO ACCEDE TO POWER IN THE NEAR FUTURE, WE COULD FACE CONSIDERABLE EMBARRASSMENT WITH ANDREOTTI. TO AN IMPORTANT DEGREE THE WILLINGNESS OF ITALIAN DEMOCRATS TO RESIST LEFTWARD PRESSURE DEPENDS ON THE CONTINUED BROAD UNDERSTANDING AMONG ITALIANS THAT THE UNITED STATES DOES NOT FAVOR A GOVERNING ROLE FOR THE PCI AND BELIEVES THAT A SOLUTION CAN BE FOUND FOR ITALIAN POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS FROM WITHIN THE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES.

4. WHILE WE CANNOT GUARANTEE THE FUTURE COURSE OF ITALIAN POLITICS WE ARE CONVINCED THAT PCI PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT IS NOT INEVITABLE. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE GAME IS OVER. THERE ARE MORE INNINGS TO PLAY. IT IS NOT TIME FOR THE CUSTOMERS TO PICK UP THEIR CUSHIONS AND GO HOME.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO LEARN WHAT IF ANY ASSESSMENT MAY BE IN PROCESS AT THE SERVICE LEVEL IN THE PENTAGON INTO WHICH A FOREIGN POLICY JUDGMENT MIGHT USEFULLY BE INSERTED. VOLPE

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** CONSTRUCTION, STUDIES, MILITARY BASES, POLITICAL SITUATION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 16 AUG 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ShawDG  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976ROME13312  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760314-0245  
**From:** ROME  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760850/aaaabref.tel  
**Line Count:** 82  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** STADIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** STADIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ShawDG  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 03 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <03 MAY 2004 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <26 AUG 2004 by ShawDG>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** DEPT OF ARMY STUDY ON ITALIAN POLITICAL EVOLUTION  
**TAGS:** PFOR, MILI, IT, US  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006